

BT/CT/RAD Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 4, 2011, 10:00 AM

Attendees: Sue Koszalka, Dan Church, Caley Heckman, Tracy Stiles, Kerry Evans, Kimberly Doan, Tanya Swanson, Deborah Carter, Caryn Conley, Sydney Fuller-Jones, Cheryl Gauthier, and Julie Nassif

Facilitator: Tanya Swanson

Recorder: Sydney Fuller-Jones

Next Meeting: October 18th, 10:00am – 11:00am, Room 133

- Tanya reported that they have had a busy week in the BT Lab. There have been two sets of Petri dishes received from Worcester that were labeled poison and radioactive. On Thursday they were set up by Cheryl and Cyndi for cultures, then it was decided Friday that they wanted PCR done on them. Tanya says they received a call mid-afternoon on Friday saying that 3 more Petri dishes were found by a child and that they wanted them tested as well. They came in marked poison only, with one dish containing a live spider. The PCR was negative. There was another specimen that was collected in Norwood (a white powder in a sealed baggie with question marks on it) that they got a call on but it seems to have gone directly to the State Crime Lab.
- Deb informed us of trainings on Bio Safety and Bio Security that took place on September 19th and 21st. They were day long seminars facilitated and lectured by Shoolah with NLTN. Shoolah has provided the training to Deb and Tanya so that they can in turn provide the same training to a target audience of their own. A lot of very good information was presented for the Bench Techs; including doing catalase in a tube rather than a slide, making it easier to see due to the fact that the curve of the tube magnifies the reaction. They were able to institute changes in some of the Clinical Labs right away, as well as the change being brought to their Sentinel Lab training last Wednesday. During the Sentinel Lab training there were regular lectures in morning, with Wet Workshops in the afternoon. There were 17 participants in attendance, and they received a lot of practical information that they could take back to their prospective labs.
- Deb also expressed the concern of the use of the Training Lab in room 456. Being that it is a shared room; it would be really helpful if a meeting is facilitated amongst the folks that are using the room, in order to suggest some guidelines on how to utilize it practically and fairly. There seems to be a problem with utilization of the different types of scopes that are used by the different groups, space, cabinets, trash, sharps, etc... The suggestion was made that since one of the BSC's is no longer in the lab, the space could be used to place a microscope cabinet for the binocular light microscopes.
- Deb also announced that there is a Teleconference being held today from 1pm to 2pm for the 2011 Influenza Update.
- Cheryl reported that the BT and Molecular Labs will participate in a full scale water exercise for Region 7 and 8 EPA, in which Kathy Nawn will be the evaluator. The lab will notionalize the water specimen by collecting the 10-Liters of water and spiking it with an unknown substance. Tanya and Becky will go in the lab and process one 10-Liter sample.

- Cheryl stated that there is also going to be a BDS exercise/table top exercise that they are working on in Shrewsbury at the processing and distribution center, date for 2012 to be announced. Some of the P&D facilities are going to be closed and there was some discussion about closing down the Shrewsbury facility. It looks as if the Shrewsbury facility will not be closed; however they are looking at potentially closing down the Springfield and Boston facilities. The equipment in those facilities which are the BDS machines would then be moved to the other facilities. Currently only first class mail goes through the BDS machine; but what they would like to do is modify the BDS equipment to process and test irregular pieces of mail such as manila envelopes . The process would be different type of system, as the mail would not go through a pitch point. Right now the BDS machines only run from 2pm-10pm. When they begin testing other types of mail, the BDS machines will actually be on earlier in the day (potentially 10am or 12noon to 10pm or 11pm at night). To date there has never been an alarm or a false positive.
- Dan had no updates, but did ask Cheryl if Epi would be a part of the EPA water testing, to which Cheryl answered no.
- Caley had no updates.
- Tracy had no updates.
- Kerry Evans from the Emergency Preparedness Division at 250 Washington Street reported that in working with Carly Levy on the PHEP Grant; that Carly would be reaching out to those involved in PHEP activity for reporting requirements and templates within the next week or so. They are in the transition period for all of their grants, and doing the end of the year reporting simultaneously.
- Kim reported that the Arbor virus season will be done next week and then Flu starts.
- Sue reported that MERL is continuing with their proficiency testing. MERL was also involved with the Worcester Petri dish incident, as one of the dishes was labeled 'Radioactive.' MERL was called and Tom Coulombe responded to Specimen Receiving and met Cheryl Gauthier, Cindy Condon and the FBI. Tom had our surveying equipment ready and instructed Cindy in its use.
- Julie stated that it has been a very busy time in dealing with a number of calls and incidents coming in. There are a lot of validations and proficiency testing going on, and a possible domoic acid on the North Shore (no samples have been done as of yet). There will be two chemical trainings coming up: Hospital Response to Chemical Emergencies. The trainings will take place on October 27th at Norwood Hospital, and on Nov 4th here at the State Lab. If anyone would like to attend or recommend a specific hospital that is within that catchment area, please let Gloria Cheng know (x6684) so that we can make sure that we extend a personal invitation to them.